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ABSTRACT

In researching articulation investigators discovered that 12% of students enrolled in U.S. educational institutions lost an average of 10 credits when transferring--a minimum total annual tuition waste of $270 million. It was determined that an online system was needed to provide academic institutions with information such as course equivalencies, curriculum guides, automated student transcript evaluations, transcript forwarding, graduate resumes, and college catalogs. In this paper, Inter-Campus Service (ICS), a project management group, proposes the development of OLLIE (an On-Line Library for Inter-Campus Exchange), to provide a worldwide commercial computer time-sharing network for such information. Each institution in the network, via the terminal/personal computer and modem, would be able to connect with the major time-sharing computer. In addition to general undergraduate curricula, articulation areas would include nursing, business, and military credits from public and private 2- and 4-year schools. Examples of proposed computer input and output from operational demonstration programs developed by ICS and cost estimates for a proposed 3-year pilot project are included. This paper describes the proposed development of OLLIE as including a pilot program, implementation, maintenance, user training, and future expansion. (Author/THC)

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OLLIE

an On-Line Library for Inter-campus Exchange

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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER PROGRAM TO BE PLACED ON A WORLDWIDE, COMMERCIAL, COMPUTER TIME-SHARING NETWORK; GOAL BEING TO PROVIDE ACCURATE COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENT TRANSFERS

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OLLIE: AN ON-LINE LIBRARY FOR INTER-CAMPUS EXCHANGE

Overview

In researching Articulation (student transfer procedures), the following statistics warranted relentless action to develop OLLIE: 12% of the students enrolled in the U. S. educational institutions lose an average of 10 credits when transferring, thus students are witnessing a minimum total annual tuition waste of $270 million. Additionally, 40% drop-out within 5 years and never return. If one-half of those students could be professionally encouraged to pursue at least two years of further education, the U. S. institutional income would increase annually by $540 million. Counselors need to resume their productive role of counseling.

The basic objective is to reduce comments such as, "Yes, Mike, 60 of your business credits from the community college are *accepted* however, only 40 of those credits *apply* to our bachelor of business administration curriculum." Counselors need accurate information as well as relief from their current "sort and suffer" clerical activity in order to return to their professional responsibilities of recruitment, retainment, and personal career advisement.

OLLIE will be a master national computer program placed on a worldwide, commercial, computer time-sharing network; long-range goal being global computerized articulation communication. Course equivalencies, curriculum guides, automated student transcript evaluations, transcript forwarding, graduate resumes, and catalogs will be available. The project management group, Inter-Campus Service (ICS), will be responsible for the development, pilot, implementation, maintenance, user training, and expansion of OLLIE. Articulation areas will also include nursing, business, and military credits of the public and private, two- and four-year schools.

Currently, the Washington Higher Education Secretariat, comprised of 27 central educational associations, is assisting ICS in obtaining grant monies for OLLIE start-up. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities will coordinate the proposal composition. The Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges will pilot the program within a subgroup of its 400 member institutions.

A three-hour slide presentation/computer demonstration accompanied by a 100-page proposal describe the three-year project plan in its entirety. Contact Inter-Campus Service.

Problem

Institutions offer an array of courses and a multitude of curriculums in order to fulfill the ambitions of the diversified student body. The mutual respect and appreciation for the privilege of autonomous school systems is not to be forfeited because of the disharmony with which they are faced. The discord before them can be summarized in one word; transferring.

There lies considerable waste of money and time at present when students transfer from one school to another. This is being circumvented by the endless cycle of new policy loop-holes counselors must decipher daily. The gamut includes the 4-to-4, the 4-to-2, the 2-to-2, and the dominant community college transfer to the four-year institution. One of the intents of the two- to four-year college program was to reduce costs of higher education. Differences between the *acceptance* of credit for "admission purposes" and the *applicability* of credit for "degree purposes" increase the difficulty of counseling. Add to the imponderables the underemphasized distinction between an Associate degree and the utilization of the community college to accomplish two years of courses applicable to a Bachelor's degree at a predetermined college. These should

be matters of full and emphatic disclosure, consumated with easily accessible, up-to-date information from our fellow schools. That information is not easily accessible and is constantly changing. The discouraging, ballooning counseling clerical workload regretfully prompts passive guidance of students' money and time.

Determining a student's knowledge in required subject areas poses another dimension of time-consuming transcript evaluation; recognition of extra-institutional learning. Documentation and testing programs (CLEP, GED, etc) are used in the assessment of military courses plus civilian non-collegiate sponsors such as businesses, corporations, government agencies, and labor unions. Institutions of postsecondary education that are not accredited by COPA-recognized accrediting bodies may lack that status for reasons unrelated to questions of quality. Once again, special steps are needed to validate credits previously earned.

Improvement in transfer-of-credit methods should encompass all of the aforementioned, concentrating on the lower level activities, merging to the upper level process. Severly needed attention should be extended to the high school transfer procedure. Foreign exchange information is yet another conglomerate of confusion. With coordination, incentive, existing knowledge, and today's technology, an increase in staff and student productivity will result through the use of a popular and proven tool; a commercial, computer time-sharing network.

Solution

The initial determination necessary would be, "Which courses at the other school(s) would be acceptable in lieu of our courses?" Gathering that data, which is now repeatedly pondered in one transcript after another, and joining that data with curriculum listings, the student transcript evaluation process will become expedient and accurate. Relieved of the

massive clerical burden, each autonomous school can redirect it's internal resources. Less paperwork reduces administration. Counseling can resume it's personal intent, directing the individual as no computer can do. Recruiting can be the focal target. Drop-outs can be delicately pursued. Creativity to provide a better educational environment can be released.

An artificial or short-sighted "quick fix" can result in an alarming loss of time, energy, and dollars. The concept of computerization having rooted, the development of autonomous state computer systems which cannot meld together in the decades ahead will provoke a catastrophe. Evolving from a cottage industry, Inter-Campus Service (ICS) has researched the current activities of "the computer articulation communication revolution" within the American higher educational structure. ICS conclusions show the need for not only a national network evolving from a state pilot project, but the inevitable long-range goal of a worldwide network.

Precautions have been taken. Each autonomous institution determines and owns their equivalency and curriculum data; the receiving school has the final authority in all student applications; the counseling responsibility is borne by the institutions, not an outside agency; the motivation to create, maintain, promote, and expand OLLIE is the responsibility of the middleman, ICS; the talents of the institutions very own experts residing at each autonomous campus will be exploited through the unique "Inter-Campus Service/On-Site" staff; the challenge to make the transition from "grant supported" to "independent" activity is not only the destiny but simply common sense.

Developing various articulation programs on established educational time-sharing networks has been a conservative "step forward" and the beginning of a perpetual headache. The institutions (particularly the engineering and medical departments which aspire to a worldwide pool of applicants) do not want to isolate themselves from other states' transfer

information nor do they want to get caught-up in numerous *Interfacing* programs; they are overwhelmingly responding to the sound approach of using an establishment created for the very type of communication sought.

A **MASTER PROGRAM** called OLLIE (an On-Line Library for Inter-campus Exchange) will be placed on **ONE, WORLDWIDE, COMMERCIAL, COMPUTER TIME-SHARING NETWORK.** Each institution, via the terminal/personal computer and modem, connects with the major time-sharing computer; this procedure does not effect the institution's internal computer staff nor functions. The major time-sharing companies have multi-lines, are capable of extremely large data bases, have minimal downtime, provide the most advanced technology, and are in business to *serve*. Renewable contracts and competitors are foremost in their minds, thus they will be acting in the same service capacity to ICS as ICS is to the institutions.

The following examples of the proposed computer program are typed versions of the actual input/output from operational Demonstration Programs developed by ICS.

MAIN MENU

0. ADDITIONAL HELP
1. COURSE EQUIVALENCIES
2. CURRICULUM GUIDES
3. STUDENT TRANSCRIPT EVALUATIONS
4. MINI-CATALOGS
5. PERSONAL PRIVILEGES
6. EXIT THE PROGRAM

ENTER SELECTION: 3

[due to the length of this paper, OLLIE's other features will be dismissed]

STUDENT TRANSCRIPT EVALUATIONS INPUT (all demo data is simulated)

DEGREE SCHOOL: ? **THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

DEGREE: ? **B.B.A.**

PRE-DEGREE SCHOOL: ? **FERRIS STATE COLLEGE**

SCHOOL OF COMPLETED CLASSES: ? **MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

COURSE: ? **DPR 180**

COURSE: ? **ECON 104**

COURSE: ? **DONE**

SCHOOL OF COMPLETED CLASSES: ? **OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

COURSE: ? **ECON 261**

COURSE: ? **ART 155**

INPUT ERROR OR COURSE NOT ON FILE

COURSE: ? **ART 156**

COURSE: ? **HIS 251**

COURSE: ? **POL 151**

COURSE: ? **ENG 151**

COURSE: ? **ANTH 271**

COURSE: ? **DONE**

SCHOOL OF COMPLETED CLASSES: ? **FERRIS STATE COLLEGE**

COURSE: ? **DPR 289**

COURSE: ? **ENG 500**

COURSE: ? **DONE**

SCHOOL OF COMPLETED CLASSES: ? **DONE**

The student's goal is to obtain a Bachelor's in Business Administration from the University of Michigan. The student wishes to continue taking classes at Ferris State College before transferring to the University. The student has completed two courses at Macomb Community College, six courses at Oakland Community College, and two courses at Ferris State College.

STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS EVALUATION OUTPUT (all demo data is simulated)

BBA/U. of M.	PRE-DEGREE/FERRIS STATE	EVALUATION
freshman - sophmore level courses:		
ACC 350	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
DPR 190	DPR 209	COMPLETED AT FERRIS STATE
ENG 105	ENG 151	COMPLETED AT OAKLAND C. C.
MAT 150	MAT 200	TO BE TAKEN AT FERRIS STATE
junior - senior level courses:		
ACC 500	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
ACC 501	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
ENG 620	ENG 500	COMPLETED AT FERRIS STATE
ENG 621	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
MAT 600	MAT 575	TO BE TAKEN AT FERRIS STATE
MAT 700	MAT 675	TO BE TAKEN AT FERRIS STATE
electives - humanities (3 credits required):		
ART 207	ART 156	COMPLETED AT OAKLAND C. C.
MUS 207	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
electives - natural sciences (3 credits required):		
BIO 191	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
PHY 181	NO EQUIVALENCY	---
electives - social sciences (3 credits required):		
HIS 300	HIS 251	COMPLETED AT OAKLAND C. C.
POL 320	POL 151	COMPLETED AT OAKLAND C. C.

Neither of the Macomb Community College courses apply to the BBA degree. Four of the six courses from Oakland Community College apply. Both courses taken at Ferris State College apply. Three courses (residency requirements not considered in this example) may be taken at Ferris before transferring. History 251 is a Humanity at Oakland Community College; Political Science 151 is a Behavioral Science at Oakland Community College; History and Political Science at the University of Michigan are both Social Sciences; therefore, the two courses are both "acceptable" (equivalent) and "applicable" (listed on the curriculum guide desired), yet one of the courses is a surplus. Departmental classifications for electives is a major confusing factor for the student who is attempting to complete Distribution Requirements at a school other than his degree school.

The tangible information (computer print-out) encourages students to seek professional guidance rather than turn towards peer guess-work; our example student lost five courses.

OLLIE . . .

. . . will include comments (for example, "non-transfer of 'D' grades") advising the student of appropriate conditions.

. . . will generate the common courses between an Associate (two year) Degree and a "pre-Bachelor program," allowing the student maximum postponement of the decision to set an Associate or Bachelor Degree goal for him/herself. Also, decisions regarding field of study can be prolonged as well by the generation of common, core courses between selected curriculums.

. . . will, with the inclusion of a complete tuition data base, generate an institutional-comparison-cost-study. Financial advantages of completing their education at one institution versus the financial advantages of attending two or more schools can be examined by the student.

. . . will receive transcripts (via the terminal/personal computer and

modem) and incorporate them directly into the computerized Student Transcript Evaluations.

. . . will analyze the Input (courses taken and chosen degree school) and produce the curriculum which maximizes the application of those courses previously completed; beneficial to students desiring "a degree" as soon as possible in order to return to the job market.

. . . will handle local , statewide , regional , national , and/or worldwide information exchange.

Negotiations are underway to fund the three-year project. The costs to develop, pilot, and implement the master program varies depending on the number of pilot schools. If two universities and eight feeder schools pilot the project, total start-up costs are estimated at $1.5 million; two universities and sixteen feeder schools, $2.3 million; four universities and sixteen feeder schools, $2.7 million; four universities and thirty-two feeder schools, $4.3 million. Upon completion of the three-year research and development period, operational costs are offset by institutional cost-savings, therefore, the result is a financially self-sustaining system.

The key element to OLLIE's positive reception lies in the fact that every individual entity of the educational structure chooses their communication partner; it is not mandatory that all participants exchange information with all other participants though that option does exist. Computerized articulation communication is permitted between two or more educational units without restraint of geographic parameters, thus OLLIE will serve an infinite number of situations ranging from two neighboring campuses to articulation communication between distant countries.